

Chicago, Illinois  
October 29, 1973

The United Secretariat  
Fourth International  
c/o Ernest Germain

Dear Comrades;

I write this in my capacity as the national coordinator of the Internationalist Tendency of the Socialist Workers Party. The Socialist Workers Party as you know is prevented from membership in the Fourth International due to reactionary legislation.

My reasons for writing at this time is to bring to your attention what we consider a very serious situation inside of the Socialist Workers Party and to ask that the Secretariat take action in this regard.

The situation in our party is such that it threatens the democratic rights of co-thinkers of the Fourth International and unless action is forthcoming from a body more responsible, than the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party, will have dire effects on the health of the Trotskyist movement in the United States.

This situation has been created, we feel quite knowingly, by the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party. Therefore it is only to have been expected that our past pleas to this leadership would, as they have, go unheeded. The following facts illustrate the situation as it now exists:

1. Transfers: The transferring or the allowing to transfer of comrades from one branch of the Party to another. Since the SWP convention in August of this year, transfers have been placed at the disposal of the National Committee of the Party, which has invested the Political Committee with the power to make all decisions in this regard. This was a change from a previous situation wherein each branch could decide whether to transfer a comrade or grant the request of a comrade to transfer for other than political reasons. (This did not exclude the right of the national leadership to ask comrades to transfer on national assignments.) The only reason for this change was for purely factional reasons on the part of the national leadership.

This has been confirmed in that there exists a double standard in permitting transfers to comrades. Those of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction are transferred quickly and without problem. Those of the Internationalist Tendency are made to write out statements which prove that their requests are not for "factional reasons" but for personal reasons.

While LTF comrades are transferred immediately and received immediately by the branch they transferred to -- IT comrades are made to wait months before permission is granted and are not allowed to participate in the branch meetings prior to the granting of the permission, which as I stated has taken months to achieve. There is one particularly illustrative case in this regard. Comrade Jean Sav., of the IT faction received a transfer from Philadelphia to Houston, prior to her having arrived in Houston -- the branch leadership placed her on the executive committee of that branch. At the same time Comrades

Cathy Mat. and Judi R. of Oakland and Houston respectively, transferred to Chicago where they waited two months without being able to speak, vote or otherwise participate as members of that branch of the Party. The situation of Comrades Judi and Cathy was also reflected in the treatment of other comrades such as Mike F., John C., who also waited two months before their transfers were allowed. In three out of four of these cases -- the comrades were transferring into branches where their companion ("husband" or "wife") lived. These situations were not unknown to the leadership of the Party which held up their transfers while granting those of every member of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction in short order time.

Still pending are transfers of several comrades. Jeff M. who is a member of the Internationalist Tendency and who transferred to Chicago during the summer from Minneapolis and who returned to Minneapolis after failing to gain entry into a university in the Chicago region. He has waited some three months now without anything being done on his request for transfer. This is his punishment, we would suppose, for having voted for the Internationalist Tendency.

Comrades Pat and Martha Q. who came to Chicago during the summer and attempted to get jobs in order that they could move into the Chicago region. Jobs are a particular necessity for these two comrades in that they have two young children to care for. When it became impossible to find employment in Chicago -- they requested to return to Madison, where they have carried out Party building work in relation to the building of the Young Socialist Alliance in that area. Pat and Martha have in the past run in Wisconsin as candidates of the Socialist Workers Party. It is also nearly three months since they requested their transfers and still nothing. (Except that they have been refused the rights to continue in the work of building the YSA which they have carried out, very successfully for years.) Again the only reason for this is the fact that they voted for the Internationalist Tendency at the last convention.

Comrade Lauren C. who moved from Oakland to Chicago for personal reasons -- job and school, has waited a couple of months and still has not received his transfer as yet. It was necessary for him to move before his transfer came, due to the long wait. David Wu. of the LTF who transferred from Boston to Chicago had no such long wait to endure in this regard nor did Susan L. who transferred from New York to Boston. The benefits of supporting the LTF become quite concrete for members of the Socialist Workers Party. (It may be pointed out that David W. and Susan L. were transferred on assignments not for personal reasons. However this just reflects the fact that members of the LTF receive assignments while the members of the IT do not. This is not a new situation of course, every minority tendency in the SWP has been treated in a like manner. Members of the former Proletarian Orientation Tendency were removed from positions of responsibility for no other reason than the fact that they held minority views.)

Comrade Beth S. of the Oakland-Berkeley branch asked in late September for a transfer to Chicago. It was well known to the Organizer Comrade Frank B. that Comrade Beth was joining her companion of over five years who was a member of the Chicago branch. Yet she was told that she must write out a request that would prove that this transfer was for personal rather than

factional reasons. Comrade Beth had indicated that she wished the transfer to take place as of December 1st. This gave the leadership over two months. However she received Comrade Frank B.'s sternest admonition "that if you leave Oakland prior to the approval of your transfer you will be in big trouble." This system of intimidation and indignity is set into operation in order to create an atmosphere of demoralization in order to drive comrades with dissident views out of the Socialist Workers Party. It starts off by creating the attitude that they are second class party members. As in fact they are now. For instance have any members of the LTF been made to write out statements proving their transfer requests are personal rather than factional? Have any members of the LTF been made to wait months for their transfer requests to be approved? Have any been told that if they move prior to a long waiting period that they will be in big trouble? The answer is of course, no. (We wish that we could have appended Comrade Frank B.'s instructions, to this letter but upon request from Comrade Beth to have them in writing, he refused.)

One rationale for the treatment of the members of the IT in this regard vis-a-vis transfers is the fact that comrades of our tendency transferred into areas prior to the SWP convention thereby using their rights to transfer for tendency gain in the voting for delegates. However, this is easily seen as baseless upon investigation. Comrades of the IT who transferred in this period were as follows:

1. Comrades Pat and Martha Q. They have been attempting to transfer from Madison for some time. The fact that they have two children to support creates an especial necessity that they have employment. While I can understand that their case is not a normal one, in that most of our party comrades do not have children, it is a particular problem that a working class organization should attempt to understand. It is also, I imagine difficult for our national committee to understand the need on the part of these two comrades to have outside employment, since the overwhelming majority of that body has never found it a necessity in their own lives. When it was impossible for them to get employment in Chicago -- they requested to return to Madison. Their two votes were not necessary for the one delegate from the Chicago area.
2. Comrade Jeff M. who transferred from Minneapolis to Chicago. There are numerous of these type of transfers every summer. Student comrades transfer from one branch to another and attempt to locate in the new area and because they are students to continue their academic pursuits. Now certainly if the party were to decide to take student comrades off of the campus for use in another way, it would be irrelevant whether a student comrade could get onto a campus in this city or that. But since this is not the policy (which I think is in this regard correct) then when a comrade, such as Jeff is unable to continue his schooling in Chicago, it is not unwise for him to return to the area where he can finish it. Again Comrade Jeff's vote was not necessary to achieve a delegate from the Chicago branch.
3. Comrade Mike F. who transferred into Chicago for personal reasons due to a severe illness on the part of his parent. He made it known prior to his transferring from New York to Chicago that it would be temporary in nature. Again his transfer

did not hinge on whether the IT would get a delegate in the Chicago branch.

Comrade Ted Stacy transferred from Houston to Chicago and Comrade John Barzman transferred from Chicago to Houston. These two transfers tended to negate one another with relation to whether Chicago or Houston would gain or lose in connection with delegates votes.

4. Comrade Kari C. transferred from Oakland to New York but since she was kept out of the Party in Oakland purposefully until after the deadline allowing members to be able to vote -- her transfer can not be seen as an attempt to gain a vote anywhere. I might mention that this was not the only case where comrades who were suspected of being in favor of the IT political positions were purposefully kept out of the Party. Two other random cases were Comrade Larry N. of Chicago (who had been in the YSA for over 4 years) and Comrade Kathy K. of Washington D.C. (also a YSA member). So it is not only transfers that are used for factional gains by the LTF but also the membership policies.

5. All the other transfers or pending transfers were after the Convention and therefore had no "vote getting" purpose at all. Comrades Cathy M., Judi R., John C. were to join comrade/companions in their respective branches. Comrade Beth S. is the same and Comrade Lauren C. is for job and educational reasons.

Finally, let me say that in attempting to overcome the purely factional nature of the 15 votes per 1 delegate ratio fixed by the SWP/LTT leadership for the SWP convention, I did discuss with Comrade Lew Jones the Party's rules on transferring comrades from one area to another to allow a truer representation for our tendency. This was after I, on behalf of our tendency, had protested the increase of necessary votes per delegate from the 7 of 1971 to the 15 of 1973, even though the size of the Party had not increased in any manner approximating this increase in delegate ratio. It was after proposing to the Party leadership that they adopt the methods of other Trotskyist groups in the Fourth International in the choosing of delegates. That is to allow regional voting, i.e. in Oakland the IMT supporters received 13 votes-in San Francisco-the IMT supporters 4 votes, in Los Angeles they received 9 votes and in Portland they received 1 vote. Totalling 27 votes but they received no delegate. This was also true of the east coast branches and of areas in the Mid-west. Even with the 15 to one ratio, the IMT supporters should have, based on the actual voting support they received, had at least six delegates-however at the convention they only had three representatives. I discussed the transfer policy with Comrade Jones for two reasons. One, in light of the Party leadership refusal to grant a system whereby a minority would have adequate representation to present its views, I thought of every possible means to overcome this situation. Secondly, I wanted an interpretation from a Party leader on whether this was permissible. Since nothing in the statutes, the 1965 organizational document or the convention call addresses this question, I sought the leadership's advice. Comrade Jones would tell me nothing at all-nothing. One further thing since in the past the leadership has used the transfer policy in the most grossly factional ways (the sending of over 50 comrades into the Oakland-Berkeley branch following the 1971 convention in order to drive out the minority comrades-it was somewhat successful I might add)-I had a justified fear

that this might be done again at convention time this year. I might add that in Portland in 1971 at the last minute the Party leadership transferred their supporters into that branch in order to prevent the Proletarian Orientation Tendency from getting a delegate.

This is the situation today in the SWP with regards to the use of transfers as part of the "war" against the IMT and its supporters in our Party.

II. DISLOYALTY. At the recent SWP convention, our Tendency which represented 9% of the Party was denied representation on the leading Party body, the national committee, because we were "disloyal." No one in our tendency or the tendency as a whole has ever been brought up on concrete charges of disloyalty. If there are disloyal actions that any individual or the Tendency as a whole has ever committed it is unknown to us and remains a secret of the leadership of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction. While it may be the contention of the SWP/LTF leadership that we think disloyal thoughts, this too has not been explained. Nor could it be, for it is baseless. The only rationale to explain the charge (label) of disloyalty is that our tendency is opposed to the political line of the LTF. However to label this as disloyalty to the SWP is to turn from Trotskyism to Stalinism for our norms of democracy. Further if this were only a label it would be bad enough but as stated above, this unproven and false allegation is used as the reason for denying our rights for representation on the national committee. We are in fact excluded from being treated as normal party members. We are "outlaws" or "illegitimates" in our own Party because of our political views, which of course also happen to be the political views of the majority of the world Trotskyist movement.

In many branches this has been used to deny us representation on the branch executive committees. Where this is not possible (Houston) the executive committee meetings become meaningless charades-form with no content. In Oakland, the branch organizer Frank B., bluntly (or perhaps crudely) stated that our tendency comrades could not be placed on the executive committee because they are "disloyal." Comrade Frank is a member of the National Committee of the SWP. This crudeness was too blatant for the national party leadership to abide and therefore under the guise of giving us a "clean slate" in order "to allow us to prove our loyalty," a comrade of our tendency was added to that branch's executive committee. However, since we never have been disloyal (nor were we ever charged concretely with being so) we reject this "clean slate" approach and we see no need to prove our loyalty. This type of reasoning is more at home in a Kafka novel or in the recesses of the Stalinist mind. Rather we would propose that the SWP/LTF leadership work to earn its own "clean slate" by immediately repudiating their charges that the IT is a disloyal tendency. Then in order to effectively convince the Party as a whole, that they take actions flowing from this repudiation. Such as the placing of our representatives on the National Committee of the Party. Further the restoration of assignments of a responsible character to members of our Tendency. The ending of the policy inaugurated after the 1971 convention of running majority slates in the branches for the executive committee. Comrades with minority political views have been denied equal treatment in the Socialist Workers Party as a matter of course for over two years. This has caused many comrades

to drop out of the Party. It has set up an atmosphere that has propelled younger comrades to lose faith in the Socialist Workers Party as a democratic centralist body. It has created deeper political differences than was necessary and resulted in splits from the Party. The expulsion of the Communist Tendency was a "set up" by the actions of the Party leadership, a set-up that the Communist Tendency walked into willingly because they had succumbed to the atmosphere created by the Party leadership and had lost faith in the Party as being a body where different political tendencies could co-exist under Leninist norms. The Leninist Faction was a victim of the factional atmosphere created after the 1971 convention. The taking away of assignments of minority comrades, the Oakland-Berkeley scandal (the transfer of 50 comrades into that branch), the running of majority slates, the removal of minority comrades from the YSA and from any other positions of responsibilities. The "witch-hunt" atmosphere created by searches for "double recruitment" "unlawful political discussion," the bleaching out of Party meetings of any political content by parliamentary devices such as the "one speaker for-one speaker against-three minutes each" rules. The recent expulsion of Comrade Gerry Clarke of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency for his political views, is but the latest in a whole series of such methods of the LTF/SWP leadership.

In addition to the above are a more numerous group of comrades who simply left the Party in complete and utter disgust with the methods by which the leadership of this Party treats comrades with political differences. Well over a hundred comrades have left the Party in the past two years for these reasons alone. This is a scandal not only within the Trotskyist movement but outside of it. It reflects on the Fourth International itself and can only be described, to use a term of the LTF-as disloyal to the interests of the world Trotskyist movement. There are facts, such as those stated above that validate and concretize this charge thereby differentiating it from the ones of the LTF/SWP leadership.

Like the transfer policy-the disloyalty charges are meant to create an atmosphere of demoralization and frustration among the minority in order to either drive them out of the Party or to provoke them into making a response that will allow the leadership to throw them out. We look upon this whole affair as a preparation for a split in the Socialist Workers Party by the leadership. It stands to reason that no serious leadership would allow those who it thought were "disloyal" to the Party to remain in the Party. Any leadership that would tolerate a disloyal tendency to remain in a Party ought to be removed for gross incompetence. It is not our opinion that this leadership even thinks this to be true. This is reflected in the fact that they have never brought anyone of our tendency up on charges of disloyalty because they are aware that this charge is an outright lie and a slander. However it will serve as a future rationale and explanation for the expulsion of our tendency. Action must be taken by the International to prevent this split in the Socialist Workers Party and to prevent the continuation of policies that have led to the loss of many very valuable comrades from the Trotskyist movement. Either "disloyal" comrades in a section of co-thinkers must be tried for concrete acts of disloyalty-or the charges must be withdrawn and repudiated by

those who made them. The Party must be made to function in a Leninist fashion. To allow such a situation to continue would be to provide for a split and would be to completely ignore the meaning of the Statutes of the Fourth International which are not contravened by the Voorhis Act.

III. RESOURCES. It is a well known fact in the world Trotskyist movement that the SWP leadership has been on a virtual sit down strike against the fulfillment of its resource obligations to advance world trotskyism ideologically. It has even come to our attention that some comrades of the National Committee such as Cde.s Shaw and Sheppard are rather proud of the fact. That is proud enough that they brag about it to individual comrades. This policy is not one of mere American chauvinism but is a conscious attempt to sabotage the capacities of the world movement in which their political views are a minority. Lacking loyalty to their own minority in their own Party they lack loyalty to the majority in the world movement. The only possible justification for this policy that we have heard is the position of Comrade Tom Kerry, given but not elaborated on, at the last SWP convention when he characterized the leadership of the Fourth International as "centrist muddleheads." However Cde. Kerry's position has never to our knowledge been adopted by the leadership of the SWP unless it is in their dual capacity as leadership of the LTF.

Coupled with this disloyal sabotage has been the complete undemocratic procedures outlined above in treatment of minorities in the SWP. Added to this has been the unwillingness to share any of the financial responsibilities of the minority while at the same time failing to allow an accounting to be given to the Party by the Leninist Trotskyist Tendency-now Faction, on how it has been able to mobilize resources to function. Recently we have been told that the membership of the faction will independently as individuals make sacrifices to allow it to function. However, even if this is now true, it raises, rather than eliminates the question on how this Tendency/Faction has been able to utilize resources in the past. These questions bear an answering. Particularly in light of the fact that the National Secretary of the Party, Cde. Jack Barnes, announced to the recent SWP convention that all the resources of the Socialist Workers Party would be used to conduct the "war" against the present leadership of the Fourth International. Further, in the presence of this writer Comrade Farrell Dobbs states "Why we're so undemocratic that we raise a war chest to fight them and we invite them to come and watch us do it." Since the only fund-raising taken at the Convention were the SWP expansion fund drive and the Militant fund drive, Dobbs was not referring to any purely LTF fund raising project.

With all of this in mind and with the added factor that during the SWP pre-convention period we approached the SWP leadership with the problem of finances in consideration of the fact that our Tendency had financial problems. We requested that they take note of this and offer a solution. We suggested the method of the now ex-Ligue Communiste which finances both the minority as well as the majority. We met with no success. Therefore in light of all of the facts, our Tendency will give only a token sustainer besides fulfilling the dues requirements for members. Until the SWP leadership fulfills its international responsibilities and ends its strike against the international,



until it ends its policy of using all of the Party's resources, our Party, if you please, to fill its war chest-until it ends its completely undemocratic practices toward our tendency, its disloyal attitude toward our tendency, and we mean in actions not word, our policy of giving only a token sustainer will be a policy of the Internationalist Tendency. We cannot be expected to pay into a "war chest" to be used to buy "bullets" to be used against us.

I raise this point because it has recently come to our attention, that Comrade Sheppard-and Comrade Boehm of the National Committee recently brought it to the attention of one of the members of our Tendency, Comrade Ralph Levitt, that his failure to give a sustainer is incompatible with membership in the Party. We understand that similar charges were made concerning Comrades Lew Pepper and Sandy Hall of the Oakland-Berkeley Branch. If these comrades were giving no sustainer they were not following our policy (which may have been due to some financial problems) but if they are giving a token sustainer that is the policy of the Internationalist Tendency, the reasons are outlined above-with the correction of the policies of the SWP/LTF we will change our policy.

We feel that it is necessary for these reasons, also, that an International fact finding commission be set up to look into these policies of the Socialist Workers Party before any further comrades are victimized.

Therefore it is a formal request on our part that the United Secretariat set up a fact finding commission to investigate these matters and to recommend solutions to them. We request that these charges on our part be communicated to all members of the appropriate bodies.

With communist greetings  
s/Bill Massey, National  
Coordinator, Internationalist  
Tendency

cc: SWP N.O.  
LTF  
IMT  
IT